

Ad Hoc Committee on Best Practices

Minutes of meeting of March 14, 2008

The meeting was called to order at 6 PM in the City Council Chambers.

Present were Lisa DePiano, James Palermo, David Narkewicz, Wendy Foxmyn, Michael Bardsley, Alex Ghiselin, Bob Reckman, Graham King and Attorney Cynthia Pepyne.

The meeting was taped to be broadcast in the future on NCTV. Al Williams of NCTV explained that it would be difficult to broadcast most of our regular business meetings live. NCTV would be able to broadcast our public input sessions if given enough time to find the necessary volunteers. Wendy will visit the NCTV studios to see if they have enough room for the committee to meet there if we want to.

Assistant District Attorney Pepyne presented information to the committee about how the open meeting law applies to all the work of our committee. She explained that we **may legally distribute draft documents on the internet to the public and the members of the committee. Comments from the public are always welcome. Comments from other committee members on a draft document or report must be addressed to the author of the draft or document. They cannot be addressed to the committee as a whole. The drafter(s) may choose to modify the document before bringing the document to a meeting of the whole committee. Committee members should avoid expressing their opinions on matters of substance in a public electronic forum.** The bold language above was reviewed with Attorney Pepyne to be sure it is correct. She also gave the committee members a copy of materials about the open meeting law.

The committee reviewed the minutes of our last meeting, made some minor changes, and approved the amended version.

Mr. Palermo suggested that we defer our discussion of our mode of organization until after we have produced the report to the City Council. The committee agreed to put this item on our agenda for our first meeting after April 3.

The committee also agreed to defer our discussion of public input practice until a later meeting. The committee agreed that our general commitment is to maximize the opportunity for public input. The methods of doing this will vary from meeting to meeting depending on the subject and format of the meeting. Flexibility will be a key means of doing this. Alex and David will create language describing our policy and distribute the draft to the committee before our next meeting.

The committee discussed the Mission Statement drafted by Jim. Wendy offered her own version. After comments by committee members, Wendy was charged with revising her draft to incorporate their suggestions. She will send the revised mission statement to the committee before our next meeting.

The committee discussed the Plan of Action. Many helpful comments were made by members of the committee. Mr. Palermo offered to redraft the plan of action for our consideration at our next meeting. He will distribute the draft to the committee before the next meeting.

The committee agreed that one of the co-chairs would be present to present and answer questions about our initial report at the meeting of the City Council on April 3.

The committee will hold its next meeting on March 27 at 6 PM in a location to be determined by the co-chairs. The committee will meet on April 7, April 21 and May 5. Once we are in June we will meet on the first Wednesday and last Thursday of the month. Our meetings will usually begin at 6 PM. The committee will schedule public meetings as required. The committee agreed that we are open to longer regular business meetings if necessary to get through our agenda.

Suggestions were made about the agenda for our next meeting. The co-chairs took notes. Lisa will not be present at our next meeting. The committee understands that there will be meetings from time to time that some committee members will not be able to attend.

David and Bob will investigate how to post information on the web and the possibility of a users group. They will report to the committee on their findings before the next meeting.

The committee adjourned at 8 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Bob Reckman